

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, March 28, 2000

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
March 28, 2000.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1658. An act to provide a more just and uniform procedure for Federal civil forfeitures, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1730. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide that certain environmental reports shall continue to be required to be submitted.

S. 1731. An act to amend the Clean Air Act to provide that certain environmental reports shall continue to be required to be submitted.

S. 1744. An act to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to provide that certain species conservation reports shall continue to be required to be submitted.

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

### FAILING U.S. SUGAR PROGRAM

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, today, I would like to bring to

the attention of the House the problems with the failing U.S. sugar program. The sugar daddy of corporate welfare is one of the most egregious programs that we have in the Federal Government, and it is now in the process of imploding.

It is a really bad, big government program that is hard to understand in our great government we have here that we continue to have a program that just does not fit in our free enterprise capitalistic economy that we have. It is a program that is bad for the consumer. It is bad for jobs in this country. It is bad for the environment. It is bad trade policy. It just makes zero economic sense.

The way the program works is, the Federal Government kind of acts like OPEC, they want to manage supply to keep the prices high. Now, we are required to allow some sugar to be imported into the United States. The Government has a loan program that they say we will guarantee the price will not drop below this amount or else we will buy the sugar. Well, all of a sudden for the first time in decades, they are on the verge of getting ready to buy a lot of sugar.

As reported in the newspaper this morning, the AP wire service story says "got a sweet tooth? Uncle Sam wants you." The Government is thinking about buying 250,000 tons of surplus sugar to pump up the domestic price, but then what will officials do with all the sugar? Enough to fill two-thirds of the Empire State Building. One idea is to donate it overseas; although, no country has indicated they are willing to even take it.

This is just the beginning, as the article goes on to say. We are talking about \$550 million worth of sugar that our agriculture department is going to have to buy this year, and it has no place to even give it away. Wow, do we have an embarrassing situation here in Washington.

The production of sugar has gone up by 25 percent in the past 3 years, because we have this high price. The price of sugar in the United States is three times what it is around the world. You can go across the border into Canada, and it is a third of the price of the United States; or go to Mexico, it is a third of the price of the United States.

What is happening to jobs in the United States? We take companies that use a lot of sugar. Hey, I cannot compete with the Canadian companies that use a lot of sugar. For example, Bobs

Candies from Georgia makes candy canes. The candy canes use a lot of sugar, and it is a lot cheaper to produce them in Canada or Mexico or some other place that buys sugar for a third of the price. So we are losing jobs in the country because sugar is used in so many of our different products, whether it is cereal or baked goods.

It is a very costly thing. In fact, the General Accounting Office says it costs over a billion dollars a year extra per year on the consumer, because of the high price we pay for sugar. This is really a regressive program, because the poor pay a lot higher percentage of the total income for the sugar program.

It is bad for the environment. I am from Florida. We are considered to have a real national treasure, the Everglades; and one of the real contributing problems to the Everglades environmentally is the runoff from the sugar plantations in Florida.

Now, we have this high price of sugar. They are growing more sugar in Florida and causing more runoff, and now we are having to buy this sugar from the sugar programs. We are going to spend \$8 billion restoring the Everglades. We are encouraging even more production in the sugar. This is one program that is hard to comprehend how you justify it in our country.

Let us talk about trade issues. When we negotiate trade agreements, what we really want to do is encourage our products to be exported around the world, whether it is orange juice from Florida or airplanes from Boeing or computers or computer software. We want to open up markets so we can sell our products. The problem our negotiators have is that we will go around and say, country, you need to open up your markets for us, as we are talking about China, but do not sell us any sugar, we want to protect our sugar plantations, our sugar barrens in Florida and elsewhere around the country, because we have to protect them; but we want you to let us sell anything we want to your country.

Explain to a trade negotiator how you explain that one away. As Mr. MCCAIN has talked about in campaign finance, this is a poster child for campaign finance. Mr. MCCAIN actually led the effort over in the Senate side to get rid of this program. Mr. Gore came out with his plan.

Sugar is one of the biggest contributors, not only in Washington, it is in Tallahassee. They are claiming poverty, but they are the biggest donors of